

RELATIVE TO WHAT ARE

15 70 "Communicable Diseases Dangerous to the Public Health."

*With reference especially to Act 45, Laws of 1895.**

[228]

[Leaflet issued by the Michigan State Board of Health.]

[FIRST EDITION DECEMBER 10, 1895.]

To properly provide for the transportation of sick persons and dead bodies in a manner which will avoid the spread of dangerous communicable diseases, is an important item in the restriction of such diseases. In order to save a little time and avoid effort in giving notice and obtaining permits, it is quite a common occurrence for interested persons to *disguise the real cause of sickness or of death.*

Dangerous communicable diseases often exist, when nothing is done by the physician, the householder, or the health officer, for their restriction, because physicians not only do not always report them to the health officer, but sometimes call these cases by names which are not usually understood to specify a "disease dangerous to the public health."

The legislature having enacted Act 45, laws of 1895, the State Board of Health has thought it an opportune time to place before railroad officials, health officers, physicians, and the people generally, a statement of just what are "communicable diseases dangerous to the public health," as the phrase is in that law; and, as well, a few of the ways in which the public-health interests are being disregarded by unscrupulous persons; and also to suggest how the public may be better guarded from such diseases:—

Document No. 226, issued by the Michigan State Board of Health, says: "In Michigan the most dangerous communicable diseases, named in the order of their importance as causes of deaths, are consumption, pneumonia, influenza,† diphtheria, typhoid fever, scarlet fever, measles, whooping-cough and small-pox." Cholera is named in the Act 45, laws of 1895. Other dangerous communicable diseases are: glanders, rabies, tetanus, typhus fever, yellow fever, puerperal fever, erysipelas, cerebro-spinal meningitis, and German measles (sometimes called rōtheln).

Most of these dangerous communicable diseases are sometimes called by other names. As examples, consumption is called phthisis, phthisis pulmonalis, tuberculosis, marasmus, etc.; pneumonia is called inflammation of the lungs, lung fever, etc.; influenza is sometimes called grip; diphtheria is called croup, heart failure, etc.; typhoid fever is called typho-malarial, malarial, remittent, etc.; scarlet fever is called scarlatina, canker-rash, etc.; puerperal fever is called peritonitis; small-pox is called variola and varioloid; rabies is usually called hydrophobia; tetanus is commonly called lock-jaw.

* Act 45, Laws of 1895, is as follows:

An act to prevent the introduction of a dangerous communicable disease in any township, city or village in Michigan, except under specified regulations.

SECTION 1. *The People of the State of Michigan enact, That no person sick with cholera, small-pox, diphtheria, scarlet fever or any other communicable disease dangerous to the public health, no corpse of a person dead from one of the above-named diseases, or from any other communicable disease dangerous to the public health, and no article which has been infected or is liable to propagate or convey any such disease, shall come or be brought into any township, city or village in Michigan, without the special permit of the board of health or of the health officer of said township, city or village, and then only under the supervision of the health officer of said township, city or village.*

SEC. 2. *Whoever shall violate the provisions of section one of this act, or the order of the health officer made in pursuance thereof, shall, on conviction, be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be punished by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars, or by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding three months, or by both said fine and imprisonment.*

Approved March 29, 1895. In effect on and after August 30, 1895.

† Up to the year 1889, influenza caused few deaths in Michigan; but in 1890, 1891 and 1892, the deaths reported from it averaged over 1,000 per year.

Whenever the cause of sickness or of death is stated as one of the above-mentioned diseases or conditions, even if the local physician does certify that it is "not contagious," the provisions of Act No. 45, laws of 1895, and other laws for the restriction of disease should be enforced; also in every case of any "fever of doubtful origin continuing more than seven days," also in every case of any fever which proves fatal; also in every case of membranous croup, and any croup which proves fatal.

Instances have been reported to this office where an unqualified person signed the special permit "required by Act 45, Laws of 1895." Care should be taken by every person responsible for the movement of a sick or an infected person, corpse, or article, that the required "special permit" be signed by an official legally qualified to do so. It should be signed by the health officer.

Every person responsible for the introduction into any locality of a person sick with a dangerous communicable disease, or a body dead of such disease, should give to the health officer of that locality, timely notice of the prospective entry of such person or body, in order that the health officer may, as the law requires, supervise the entry of such diseased person or such dead body into his jurisdiction.

SEC. 14. The Board of Health may grant permits for the removal of any nuisance, infected article, or sick person within the limits of their township, [city or village, Act 145 of 1879] when they shall think it safe and proper so to do. §1646, Howell's Statutes.

From this it will be seen that a permit by the board of health for the removal of an infected article, dead body, or sick person is *good only within the limits of the township, city or village in which the permit is granted.*

No health officer or board of health should permit the removal to another jurisdiction in Michigan of a person sick with or dead from a disease declared by the Michigan State Board of Health to be a "disease dangerous to the public health" without first seeing the "special permit" of the health officer of the township, city or village to which it is proposed to move the sick person or dead body, nor until the health officer of the place to which the infected person or body is to go has had such notice of the time of the prospective arrival of the person or body as will enable him to supervise the entry and disposal as the law provides.

Every railroad or other transportation agent at the point of destination of any such sick person or dead body should notify the health officer of his locality, or know that he has been notified, of the arrival, and if possible of the prospective arrival of a person or body which under Act 45, Laws of 1895, requires the supervision of such health officer.

Every railroad agent or other person receiving an application for the transportation of any sick person or dead body, should first learn from the health officer or other legal health authority of the city, village or township where such application is made, the disease from which the person is suffering or which caused the death of such body. If such sickness or death is or has been caused by some disease declared by the Michigan State Board of Health to be "dangerous to the public health," such railroad or other transportation agent should refuse to transport such sick person or dead body until by telegram or otherwise a special permit shall have been procured from the health officer of the township, city or village to which such dead body or sick person is sought to be transported. Such railroad or other transportation agent should refuse to transport such sick person or dead body until convinced that the health officer of the place of destination has had such notice of the prospective entry into his jurisdiction as will enable him to supervise its entry, as the law provides.

By direction of the State Board of Health.

Very respectfully,

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE
MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF HEALTH,
Lansing, Mich., Dec. 10, 1895.

HENRY B. BAKER,
Secretary.